

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 18, 2025

Members Present: Beth Cook, Bob Cook, Emma Hanson, AnnMarie Harmon, Becca Newhall, Alice Peal, Jonathan Ursprung

Members Absent:

Staff Present: York Haverkamp, Town Administrator; JB Weir, Planning and Zoning Administrator

Others Present:

II. Regular Business

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by Jonathan Ursprung. The meeting was held in person at the Town Offices and remotely via Zoom.

2. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items

No changes were made to the agenda.

3. Public Forum

Nobody requested an opportunity to comment.

4. Groundwater Protection Overlay District Public Hearing

There were no attendees for the Public Hearing, which Jonathan called to order at this point in the meeting. Alice provided some background information on Act 250 proceedings and the preferred use of propane over diesel for water protection purposes. JB explained that consultation with the Town's attorney indicated that nothing should be included that would potentially conflict with the State's Forestry Accepted Management Practices (AMPs).

It was agreed to keep the hearing open until the end of the meeting, to allow for comments if any others joined the meeting.

5. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of January 21, 2025 were approved.

6. CVRPC/Other Update

Alice provided the following updates:

- Meadow Road bridge – she continues to work with Keith Cubbon on seeking funding for the engineering work to be completed; they are prepared to pivot to state-level funding if necessary due to the federal freeze on many funding sources. The lower weight limit for the bridge has been posted. It was acknowledged that the cost may increase as materials become more expensive, including impacts of tariffs being imposed.
- Flood Ready webinar – Alice recommended watching a recording regarding a UVM study identifying flood plains and areas for restoration, with a presentation by Rebecca Deihl outlining strategies for reconnection of floodplains
- Flood Ready third Thursday drop-in sessions are helpful, as well

- Couples Field – Alice confirmed for AnnMarie that this area is a floodplain, and has adjacent wetlands as well
- Regional Plan – work on the Energy chapter first draft is completed, siting of renewables has been considered; it is possible that utilities/developers will be able to override local Plan outlines of where/where not to site infrastructure. The housing studies/projected numbers and Energy Plan information may need an amendment in coming years.
- Future Land Use Plan – work at the regional level is beginning on this topic; a housing study has been completed and a survey is being developed by CVRPC
- Climate Action Plan – the initial draft of this Plan is in progress

7. Village Master Planning

The Steering Committee meeting scheduled for this week had been cancelled, but one is scheduled for next week so that things may be reviewed before the public meeting in March.

AnnMarie reported on some information she had learned about the swimming pool recently constructed in St. Albans, noting that the population there is about the same as the MRV towns, that the pool is covered in winter by an inflatable roof, and that it is intended to operate the pool with user fees as income, with LOT revenue as a backup. There was additional discussion of recent development in St. Albans, with JB noting that he and others are planning to visit the city in the near future.

Child care logistics and food to be provided at the public meeting were discussed. It was agreed to send information about the meeting home through the elementary schools.

It was confirmed that the format of this gathering will be an open house, with interested people able to come at their convenience.

8. Wastewater Planning Project Update

JB highlighted some of the funding information he had included in the meeting packet, noting that the Northern Borders program had just announced that applications are again open and that Lynette Claudon will once again be the Town's contact at DEC; she will have some additional funding information in the coming days. JB also noted that pre-selection bids for advanced treatment systems are going out from Dubois & King, and that related restrictions at the Village Meeting Place/Church site are being discussed with Wrenn Compare.

9. Other Business

It was agreed that PC members would plan to either attend or watch the recording of the upcoming Master Planning Steering Committee meeting and provide feedback to Committee members in advance of March's public meeting on the project.

The PC will not meet on March 4, Town Meeting Day.

AnnMarie reported that Fred Messer is available to join the April 1 meeting to discuss emergency shelter and related information.

Overlay District adoption:

MOTION: *Bob made a motion to approve for adoption the Groundwater Protection Overlay District map, standards and pertinent definitions, and to send the amendments to the Selectboard for its own public hearing. The motion was seconded by AnnMarie, and passed unanimously.*

Jonathan closed the public hearing.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary